THE Practice and Doctrine OF THE PRESBYTERIAN PREACHERS ABOUT THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM EXAMINED.

βαπτιζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι υἱοποιούμεθα, υἱοποιούμενοι τελειούμεθα, τελειούμενοι ἀθανατιζόμεθα. Clem. Alex. Lib. 1. Ped. c. 6.

Being baptized we are illuminated, being illuminated we are adopted to the inheritance of sons, being adopted we are advanced towards Perfection, being perfected we are made immortal.

THE PREFACE.

AMongſt all the Sects profeſſing Chriſtianity, None make more ſpecial Claims to it, nor pretend more to be determin'd in all Controverſies in Religion by the Sacred Scriptures, ſo as to decline the Teſtimony of venerable Antiquity, than our preſent Scots Presbyterians. And yet the candid Reader may eaſily pereeive by the following Paper, how unacountably they contradict the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, by their Doctrine and Practice about one of the two Poſitive Inſtitutions of our Bleſſed Saviour, by which he deſign'd his Diſciples and followers ſhould be diſtinguiſh'd from the Profeſſors of all other Religions in the World, and to which he hath given a perpetual Obligation. Their ſpecious pretence to be determined only by Scripture, is the reaſon why the onely Arguments I have made uſe of, to prove againſt them the Neceſſity of Baptiſm in order to Salvation, are plain Texts of the New Teſtament; Texts whoſe genuine ſenſe and meaning are obvious enough to convince any ordinary and unbyaſs'd Judgement.

The Practice and Doctrine of the Presbyterian preachers concerning the Sacrament of Baptism, Examined.

HOW Unreasonably Clamorous soever the Presbyterian Preachers are, both from their Pulpits, and in their Pamphlets, against a *Toleration* to the Episcopal Clergy and People; Yet what is most surprising is, that, in face of Parliament, they should Preach and Print palpable Untruths in matters of Fact to prevent it; For instance, they assert, *That very few of the Episcopal Perswasion refuse communion with them*: How notorious a Falshood this is, a goodly Number of the Nobility, Barons and Burgesses in Parliament can tell, who are too well acquainted with the great backwardness of many Thousands of competently knowing Christians, and sound Protestants in the Kingdom, to join in Communion with them. And if I offer a few weighty Reasons of their aversion, to the Serious consideration of our Presbyterian Bretheren, I humbly crave that, instead of more Clamour and Calumny, they will be pleased to Vouchafe me a solid and satisfactory answer.

I will nor meddle with what is objected against the Validity of their Ordinations, and power either to Administer the Sacraments and Exerce other Ministerial Functions, at present, or to propagat a Church by conveying a Succession of a lawfull Priesthood to after Ages: Only I presume, as a Friend, to advertise them, that they are highly concern'd seriously to re-

fleet on it, leſt the Charge prove true againſt them, and they be one day found Sacrilegioſly to have uſurped a Vicegerency to Chriſt, without his Miſſion and Inveſtiture.

What I am now to offer to their View, relates meerly to their Practice and Doctrine, about the Sacrament of Baptiſm. And

Firſt, Nothing is a more Notorious matter of Fact, than that they univerſally refuſe to Baptize, unleſs it be on a *Sunday*, or ſome other Set preaching day of the Week; ev'n tho' they are credibly inform'd, that the Children, for whom the benefit of Baptiſm is required, are more likely to die, than live one day; and tho' the Parents are willing (notwithſtanding that critical circumſtance) to carry their Children to Church to be Baptized.

If our Brethren (for a Reaſon of this their Cruel delay of Baptiſm to a Preaching day) ſay, That they have our *B. Saviour's* command to *Teach* when they Baptize, *Math.* 28. 19. 1. I ask, Whether they can prove from that Text, the neceſſity of *Teaching* at or before Baptiſm. The words in the original import no ſuch thing; they are Πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς, &c. *Beza* himſelf in his moſt accurate Tranſlation, renders them thus, *Profecti ergo Diſcipulas facite omnes Gentes, Baptizantes eas*, &c. So that this is the true ſenſe, *Go ye therefore and Diſciple, or make Diſciples of all Nations Baptizing, or by Baptizing them*, &c. And *Beza* reaſons very well for this ſenſe. But if this be the True ſenſe, what is become of our Brethrens Arguments?

2. Suppoſing that μαθητεύσατε were juſtly tranſlated *Teach ye*; yet is there not a notable difference between the Circumſtances of Thoſe and Theſe Times? When our *Saviour* ſpake the words, Chriſtianity was not the Received Religion of any Nation. 'Twas a Religion then to be propogated. 'Twas congruous therefore that at Initiations into it, the Nature and Deſign of it ſhould have been taught thoſe who were to be Initiated. 'Tis not to be ſuppos'd that either the Parents or Sureties of Infants want to be taught the Nature and Deſign of the Chriſtian Faith. The Infants themſelves are

not capable of being Taught. How widely then, does the caſe as it was then, differ from what it is now?

3. Suppoſing Still that μαθητευσατε were juſtly Tranſlated *Teach ye*, yet will our Brethren ſay, that the Precept is not obeyed by the Miniſters inſtructing the Parents, or Sureties, and witneſſes at Baptiſm in the neceſſary Principles of Chriſtian Religion, unleſs there be a formal Sermon, or Homily, delivered by him on a Particular Text of Scripture?

4. Will they ſay, That the Precept of Baptizing (which *in Terminis* is as expreſs and peremptory as the other) is not preſumptouſly broken by them, when they refuſe to adminiſter Baptiſm to Poor Infants, tho' in a probable danger of Dying, for no other reaſon, but becauſe the day appointed for delivering their Notions on a particular Text of Scripture is not come? I ſay, for no other reaſon, becauſe 'Tis profeſſedly agreed to by them as well as by us, That the Children of Chriſtian Parents are under no Federal Incapacity to receive Baptiſm as ſoon as they are *Born*.

5. Let the Precept of *Teaching*, when *Baptizing*, be as peremptory & binding now as our Brethren can poſſibly ſuppoſe it; will they deny, That it is obey'd to better Purpoſe, and the Parents, or Sureties, and Witneſſes better edified in purſuance of the Precept, by a quarter of an Hours Inſtruction in the neceſſary *Principles* of Chriſtianity, than by many Sermons Preach'd on particular Texts of Scripture? And this kind of moſt uſeful and neceſſary *Teaching*, I think, a Miniſter of the Goſpel is oblig'd to be qualified and prepared for, on all occaſions.

But, I ſuppoſe our Brethren are not ſo vain-glorious as to ſay, That they can always Preach *extempore* on any Text of Scripture, if they ſpeak any thing of Tolerable Senſe. But, *Periculum in mora*, Children ſometimes Die, and often may, before the Miniſter hath Studied his Sermon, at leaſt before the Day appointed for Preaching it, is come: And then, what excuſe can he make for refuſing to adminiſter Baptiſm to them ſooner? Will he ſay that he was not prepared to Preach on a Particular Text of Scripture; or, if he was, that the day

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appointed for Preaching was not come? And will this make amends for his contemptuous breach of the Precept of *Baptizing* when there is occasion? How ever our Presbyterian Brethren may thus impose upon Ignorant & credulous people, are they certain that the Righteous Judge will not in the day of their final Reckoning, require at their hands the Souls of those Infants who (through their refusal) die Unbaptized; If they are not, *I* think they are highly concern'd to prevent the danger, by a dutiful obedience to his precept of Baptizing whenever there is occasion.

But there is something else, besides a fondness to shew their Gifts on particular Texts of Scripture, or a Religious regard to a Day, whereby our Brethren pretend to justify their cruelty to poor Infants, in suffering them to Die Unbaptized; For, when it so falls out, as it most frequently does, Then

Secondly, their current Doctrine is, That *Baptism is not necessary to Salvation.* This is a Principle they so industriously labour to perswade the People of, that it cannot be denied or dissembled. But *I* crave to be informed by them, in what School they have been taught this Doctrine, in what System of Religion they have found it; For, *I* am sure not in the Christian. If they pretend they have found it there, Then 1. I ask, if they'll deny, That our *B. Saviour* did institute this Sacrament to be administred in the outward Symbol, as the *Sacred Rite* for *Initiating* us in his Religion, making us his Disciples and members of his Mystical Body, and giving us an Interest in all the Benefits and Priviledges of the Evangelical Covenant, the onely Covenant wherein Salvation is now offered to perishing Sinners?

2. I ask, if they'll deny, that our *Blessed Saviour* did give this Sacrament (which we affirm to have been instituted by him for these great Ends) a Perpetual obligation, but left it to the Discretion of his Substitutes in the Church, to be Administred by them, or not, when, and to whom they please?

If they'll maintain both, or either of these Propositions; then let *Turks* and *Heathens* (who can Read our Bibles and un-

understand the import of words) judge, if we have not too great reason to charge them with gross Error upon the plain and intelligible Principles of Christianity.

But if this be found so pressing upon our Brethren, that they'll be forced to acknowledge Baptism necessary to Salvation, but not absolutely and indispensably. They will not escape by this Distinction, if we can prove against them, That Baptism is so necessary to all who are, or will be saved upon the Ordinary Covenanted Gospel Terms of Salvation, that, without it, none are saved on these Terms.

For Proof of this, I only offer this Complex Proposition, *viz.* That the Holy Spirit and Remission of Sins are in the *New Testament* said to be conferred in Baptism, and in no place in the New Testament said to be conferred by any other Covenanted and instituted ordinary means, antecedent to, and independent upon Baptism. If this proposition hold both in the Affirmative and Negative parts of it, then 'Tis past dispute, that Baptism is so necessary to all who are, or will be saved upon the ordinary Covenanted Gospel Terms of Salvation, that, without it, none are saved on these Terms.

'Tis not ordinary to prove Negatives; if our Brethren think the Negative part of this Proposition false, they are oblig'd, by the Rules of Argument, to prove it so, by Assigning the ordinary means provided and instituted by our Bl. *Saviour* in the Gospel for conferring the Spirit and Remission of Sins, antecedent to, and independent upon Baptism. The Affirmative part onely is our Task. And therefore

1. That the Holy Spirit is conferred in Baptism, is clear from *Tit.* 3. 5. where Baptism is called *The washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Nay, The Holy Spirit is, in the Gospel, said to be so given in Baptism, that he cannot be said to have the Spirit who is not Baptized. And this is more than we are concern'd to prove. But the words of our *B. Saviour* himself to *Nicodemus* (in *John* 3. 5.) are a clear proof of it, For, There he joins Baptism and the Holy Spirit together; and by his Decretory Sentence makes both so necessary to Salvation, that he declares, with

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a re-doubled *verily*, That without Baptiſm in the outward Symbol, and the Spirit, none can be ſaved, *Verily verily, I ſay unto thee, Except a man be born of WATER and of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD.* And he places Baptiſm firſt in order before the Spirit, plainly inſinuating that he hath not only made both neceſſary to all that will enter into the Kingdom of God, but made it likeways the property of Baptiſm to confer the Spirit. And that this much was intended by him, muſt be granted by our Brethren, if they'll allow that St. *Peter* underſtood his mind ſufficiently, and was infallibly ſecur'd from Error in delivering it on the day of *Pentecoſt*, and I think they muſt grant he he was ſo then, if ever; For, being then filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and conſequently infallibly guided, he exhorts his Auditors *To repent, and be Baptized every one of them in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins, and they ſhould receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.* Acts 2. 38.

And when St. *Paul* addreſs'd himſelf to ſome at *Epheſus* (who before were Baptiz'd with *John*'s Baptiſm, wherein they were taught *To believe on him which ſhould come after*, that is, on *Chriſt Jeſus*) he asked them, *If they had received the Holy Ghoſt ſince they believed?* And upon their replying, *That they had not ſo much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghoſt.* He firſt *baptiz'd them in the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* And then he *laid his hands upon them, and the Holy Ghoſt fell on them; and they ſpake with Tongues and propheſied.* Acts 19. 1.---6.

But our Presbyterian Brethren may ſay, the Holy Ghoſt was ſometimes given before Baptiſm. I grant it, as in the Instance of *Cornelius* and his company, recorded in *Acts* 10.

But the Argument I am purſuing is ſo for from loſing, that it gains by this Instance. For, The Holy Ghost fell on them in a manner, ev'n then, extraordinary; *viz.* by immediat Effuſion from Heaven without the, then, ordinary mediation of Apoſtolical Miniſtry by Impoſition of hands. And St. *Peter* himſelf (at whoſe Sermon the Holy Ghoſt fell on them) gives a moſt ſatisfactory Reaſon for the Extraordinarineſs of the

Inſtance, *viz.* to prevent and remove the Scandal the *Jewiſh* Converts were too ready to take, when they ſaw the Incloſure broken, and the Uncircumciſed *Gentiles* made Heirs with them of Salvation, by the Preaching of the Goſpel, and Miniſtration of our *Saviour's* Baptiſm to them; as is clear from his Queſtion (*v.* 47.) to thoſe of the Circumciſion then preſent, Saying, *Can any man forbid WATER that theſe ſhould not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghoſt, as well as we?* See, and conſider to this purpoſe alſo, his defence for what he had done, recorded in *Acts* 11. Which the Scandalized Apoſtles and Brethren that were in *Judea* no ſooner heard, than they gave over their contention with him, *and glorified God, ſaying, Then hath God alſo to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. v.* 18.

And now, To let our Brethren ſee, that the Argument I am managing, inſtead of loſing, gains by this Inſtance; I ſhall deſire them to conſider, that if ever Baptiſm in the outward Symbol was unneceſſary to any, 'Twas to them who (in ſo extraordinary a manner) were baptized with the Holy Ghoſt. But ſo far was the Apoſtle from thinking it unneceſſary to them, that, immediatly after the Holy Ghoſt fell on them, *He commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Acts.* 10. 48. And I am hopefull our Brethren will not deny that St. *Peter's* Tongue was directed by an infallible Guide, and ſpake by the Holy Ghoſt when he gave that Command.

But ſuppoſe *Cornelius* and his Company had Died and gone to Heaven, after the Holy Ghoſt fell on them, before Baptiſm in the outward Symbol could be adminiſtred unto them, yet ſuch an extraordinary inſtance would be ſo far from concluding againſt us in the Affair we contend for, that this much Truth at leaſt is on our ſide, *viz.* That the Covenanted Right to the Holy Ghoſt was ordinarily given in Baptiſm, and that none who had not firſt received Baptiſm in the outward Symbol, were upon the ordinary Goſpel Terms, qualified to receive the Holy Ghoſt.

And tho' thoſe ſenſible ſigns, ſuch as ſpeaking with tongues &c. that ordinarily did in the days of the Apoſtles, do not now follow upon the Miniſtration of Baptiſm; yet I ſuppoſe our Bretheren will acknowledge, That the Graces of the Spirit are now as neceſſary to Salvation, as ever; that is, abſolutely neceſſary to keep us from Sin, and to direct and aſſiſt us in the performance of our duty; and that without the Divine aids of the Spirit we cannot put up thoſe Petitions that will be acceptable to God; And That our Praying in the Spirit, is that alone which can be Succeſsful; And, in a word, that they who have not the Spirit of Chriſt are none of his, that is, have no Title to, nor Intereſt in, what he has done and Suffered for Sinners; and ſo cannot be ſaved. and therefore, ſince the Holy Spirit is conferred in Baptiſm, and ſince there is no other ordinary means for conferring him, provided and inſtituted by our *B. Saviour* in his Goſpel, antecedent to and independent upon Baptiſm (And I think it will be hard for our Brethren to Aſſign any) it neceſſarily follows, That Baptiſm Miniſtred in the outward Symbol, is moſt neceſſary to all who are, or will be ſaved upon the ordinary Goſpel Terms of Salvation.

2. As for Remiſſion of Sins (without which, I preſume our Brethren will alſo grant, there is no Salvation) 'Tis ſo frequently in the *New Teſtament* attributed to Baptiſm, that I might give many inſtances. But I think the Inſtance of *St. Paul*, (recorded in *Chapters* 9. and 22. of the *Acts*) is ſo clear a proof of it, that they muſt be unaccountably blind and prejudicated who will not be convinced by it. There we Read, That before his Converſion, he not only made havock of the Church at *Jeruſalem*, but procur'd Letters of Authority from the High Prieſt, the more effectualy to execute his inſatiable Cruelty upon the Diſciples at *Damaſcus* alſo. But tho' his Converſion was extraordinary and Miraculous, Tho' our *Lord Jeſus* himſelf ſpake to him from Heaven, and told him that in *perſecuting his ſervants, he perſecuted him, and that it was hard for him to kick againſt the pricks*; and ſo made him, with a trembling and relenting heart, Cry out,

Lord,

Lord, what would thou have me to do? I ſay, Tho' our *Lord Jeſus* himſelf, in ſo extraordinary and miraculous a manner, convinced him of his former wickedneſs, and reclaimed him from his intended perſecution: Yet he did not immediatly pronounce him abſolved from the Guilt of his Sins, but directed him to the ordinary Means inſtituted by Him in the Goſpel, for obtaining Remiſſion, ſaying, *Ariſe and go into the City, and it ſhall be told thee what thou muſt do.* *Acts* 9. 6. And, That the Sacred *Rite* of *Baptiſm* was the onely ordinary means, is evident from what *Ananias* ſaid to him; *Ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy Sins.* *Acts* 22. 16.

Can there be a more concluding Argument required, than this, for the great neceſsity of Baptiſm for the Remiſſion of Sins, and conſequently for putting periſhing Sinners in a Salvable condition? Does not this very Inſtance evidently ſhew, that the Goſpel concludes all men under Sin, and therefore in a periſhing condition, (ev'n tho' they do repent and forſake their Sins) untill they are waſhed in this *Laver*? In a word, Does it not put the laſting Obligation of this Sacrament beyond diſpute, and demonſtrate the horrid impiety of denying to adminiſter it to dying Infants, when the *Bleſſed Inſtitutor* himſelf would not diſpenſe with it in ſo extraordinary an Inſtance?

Beſides, I ask what our Brethren will make of thoſe plain Texts, In *Gal.* 3. 27. *As many as are baptized unto Chriſt have put on Chriſt.* In *Col.* 2. 12. where we are ſaid *To be buried with Chriſt in Baptiſm, and riſen with him in Baptiſm.* And in the 1. *Pet.* 3. 20. 21. Where the Apoſtle makes the compariſon between *Noah's being ſaved in the Ark by water, and our being ſaved by Baptiſm.* Are theſe *New Teſtament* Texts, words ſpoke only at random? Or were the Apoſtles in earneſt, and infallibly guided when they ſpake them? If they were; then I ask, if our Brethren can deny that unbaptized perſons want ſomething very neceſſary to Salvation, as Salvation is provided and offered in the Goſpel?

For further illuſtration of this Argument, I ſuppoſe an Adult perſon of fifty or ſixty years, who (ever ſince he was

of competent Age) has ſincerely believed, and openly profeſſed the Chriſtian Religion, and behaved very harmleſly; But we come at laſt to receive all the Moral Certainty imaginable that he was never baptized, and himſelf ingenuouſly & openly confeſſes it; I ask our *Brethren*, If, on their Conſcience, they wonld think it ſafe to admitt him to a Participation of the Sacrament ot the Lord's Supper, tho' he earneſtly ſought it with Prayers and tears, untill he were Baptized? If not, (And I muſt think they would not, till I am told the contrary) Then I ask, If they would think him in a Salvable condition, and qualifi'd for the Viſion of God, and the Society of the Triumphant Hoſt in Heaven, upon the Covenanted and revealed Goſpel Terms, as long as he were, upon the ſame Terms, unqualified for the Communion of the Saints militant on Earth, for want of Baptiſm? If not, Then the Argument I'm purſuing is moſt concluding againſt them, *viz.* That Baptiſm is moſt neceſſary to all who are, or will be Saved upon the ordinary revealed Goſpel Terms of Salvation.

But our *Brethren* may ſay, The Children of Chriſtian Parents (as ſuch) are comprehended within the Goſpel-Conant, and Conſequently in a Salvable Condition upon the Terms of it, tho' they die unbaptized, *The promiſe*, (as ſpeaks *St. Peter* to the *Jews* in *Acts* 2. 39,) *being made to them* (*viz.* the Chriſtian *Parents*) *and their Children.*

I Anſwer, all that can be inferr'd from theſe words of the Apoſtle is, That the Parents, being Chriſtians, have a federal Right to require the *Benefit* of *Baptiſm* to their Children, and the Children themſelves are in a federal diſpoſition to receive it whenever they are born; *But* not, That the Children are are in a Salvable Condition, upon the ordinary revealed Goſpel Terms of Salvation, as long as they are unbaptized; For, to put them in a Salvable condition upon theſe Terms, 'Tis neceſſary that they be made Chriſtians. And *I* think, 'T will be hard for our Brethren to prove by any thing reveal'd in the Goſpel, that they are Chriſtians untill they are baptized in the Name of Chriſt. And if, while they want Baptiſm, they want ſomething that is neceſſary to make them

Chriſtians

Christians, it necessarily follows that they want something that is necessary to Salvation, If the being Christians, that is, the being initiated in the Religion and Disciple-ship of Christ, signifies any thing of real Priviledge, or Title to the Salvation provided and offered in the Gospel.

Moreover, *St. Paul* says in *Heb.* 12. 14. (And I hope our Presbyterian Brethren believe it infallibly true) *That without Holiness no man shall see the Lord.* Therefore I ask, if they think the Children of Christian Parents (as such) to be so Holy a seed, that they bring nothing of Moral Impurity with them to the World? If they bring none, then what becomes of the Doctrine *of Original Sin*, and our being born with the Image of fal'n *Adam*, whereby we are concluded under a state of Sin and Death, untill we are renewed and born again? If they'll grant (as I presume they will) That we bring any thing of Moral Impurity with us to the World, and are therefore concluded under a State of Sin and Death notwithstanding the Christianity of our Parents; Then I ask, What means has our *B. Saviour* provided and instituted in the Gospel, for putting us in a State of Holiness and Life, and applying the Merit of his Blood to us for obtaining Remission, without which we cannot be Saved? What means, I say, has our *B. Saviour* provided and instituted in his Gospel for obtaining of this, antecedent to, and independent upon Baptism? If there be any, let it be assign'd, and the Controversy is ended. If there be none, Our Brethren must yield to us, That Baptism is so necessary to Salvation upon the ordinary revealed Gospel Terms, that no unbaptized person is saved but in an extraordinary and uncovenanted manner. And I think any man runs a desperat hazard that slights the ordinary, Covenanted and Instituted (and therefore necessary) means of Salvation, in hopes of being saved in an extraordinary, uncovenanted and unnecessary manner: And if he does, what words can be expressive enough of the Cruel Impiety of refusing to dispense the ordinary, instituted and necessary means to dying Infants, and throwing them upon the chance of extraordinary, uncovenanted, unnecessary and uncertain Methods of Salvation?

I do not deny, That Christ (*To whom all power in Heaven and in Earth is given*, Math. 28. 18.) can save as easily without, as with the means of Salvation provided and instituted by him in his Gospel: But the Question is, If he will, so long as the Instituted means can be had, until he first Repeal their Obligation. And can our Brethren shew (whenever they suffer a poor Infant to die unbaptized) That Christ has, for that Instance, repeal'd the Obligation of Baptism? Or rather, can they (to Justify their Cruelty to dying Infants, and their Presumptuous disobedience to the Precept of Baptizing;) prove, that he hath repeal'd it's obligation for good and all? If he has not, then I may be bold to affirm against them, that if Children die unbaptized, (not meerly through the Minister's refusal, but even, when none can be had to Administer Baptism to them) and they are saved notwithstanding, it is not by the ordinary means provided and instituted by Christ in his Gospel.

We hope Children, dying under such inevitable Circumstances, are saved. But then, all the Foundation on which we can build out hope of their Salvation is, that it is more aggreeable to the Essential Goodness & Infinit Mercy of God to save them, than to let them Perish Eternally, when there was such a moral Impossibility of administring the Ordinary, Covenanted, Instituted, and therefore necessary, means of Salvation to them; and this amounts to no more than a Probability.

Whereas, on the other hand, we have our *Blessed Saviour's* express promise to build an infallible Belief on, that Baptized Children, if they Die before they are guilty of Actual Sin, are saved by their very Baptism washing away their Original Pollution, and applying the Merit of Christs Blood to them. This promise is as express as words can make it; in *Mark* 16. 16. *He that Believeth and is Baptized, shall be saved.* 'Tis true, Our *Blessed Saviour* there joyns Belief with Baptism. But then, 'Tis aggreed to by our Brethren, as well as by us, that the Christian Parents, or Sureties, Profession of the Faith in Name of the Children is sufficient in Baptism.

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There are many things occurring to me, as I am writing, very pertinent to this Argument. But I think, *I* have ſaid enough already to frighten any, that takes the Office of a Miniſter of the Goſpel upon him (if he truely underſtands, and Seriouſly conſiders the value of Souls) out of this impious practice of denying the benefit of Baptiſm to poor Infants; and to make him Renounce, as a groſs Error, the Doctrine of the *Non-neceſſity of Baptiſm to Salvation.*

And ſince our Brethren, in their Clamours againſt a TOLERATION to the Epiſcopal Clergy and People, ſuggeſt dangerous Conſequences that may follow upon the Parliaments granting it; I leave it to all the Judicious and conſidering Members of that Honourable Court to Judge, were all *Scotland* Presbyterian, If it is not to be feared that our Brethren would wholly lay aſide the Adminiſtration of that Sacred *Rite*, as an unneceſſary or indifferent Ceremony, and entail a moſt intolerable Miſchief upon poſterity, *viz.* The want of the ordinary means, provided & inſtituted by our *B. Saviour*, for initiating us in his Religion, entring us into his church, making us Members of his Myſtical Body, and giving us a Legal title to, and intereſt in, all the Benefits and Priviledges of the Evangelical Covenant.

If this Miſchievous conſequence is not very reaſonably to be feared upon the Nation's being wholly Presbyterian, why have our Presbyterian *Brethren* already, in great meaſure, *Eſtabliſh'd the Iniquity by a Law*, by making Acts of their General Aſſemblies againſt the Adminiſtration of the Sacrament of Baptiſm in privat, that is in Houſes, to poor Infants, without excepting ſuch as are in danger of Dying? Why do they, in purſuance of thoſe Acts, ſuffer ſo many Infants to Die unbaptized, as is too well known they do in all parts of the Kingdom? Nay, Why do they generally refuſe to *Baptize* in the very Churches, unleſs it be on a Preaching Day? and, ev'n when they are Preaching, why will they not be prevail'd with, by any entreaties, to *Baptize* Infants expiring before their Eyes, untill the Sermon is ended, whereof ſeveral Inſtances can be given? And why do they Juſtify this

Horrid Cruelty to dying Infants by their common Doctrine, publickly asserting, that Baptism is not necessary to Salvation, and that Infants sustain no prejudice tho' they Die unbaptized? A Doctrine which a Million of Witnesses in the Kingdom can, upon their Faith and Truth, charge them with. I leave it, I say, to all the Judicious and considering Members of the Honourable Court of Parliament to judge, If 'tis not to be feared (were all the Nation Presbyterian) That the woful consequence of such Acts of General Assemblies, and of such practices in pursuance of those Acts, and of such a Doctrine in defence of both, would be the laying wholly aside the Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, as an unnecessary or indifferent Ceremony, with the Solemnity of a *Non obstante*. And now, I proceed

Thirdly, To another most pernicious Error our Presbyterian Brethren are all chargeable with, an Error which puts an invincible Barr in the way of all Orthodox, Judicious and considering Protestants to joyn in communion with them, *viz.* their adding to the Creed in Baptism, by requiring of the Parents, or Sureties, in name of the Children to be Baptized, a Belief of their Confession of Faith, and Shorter and Larger Catechisms, as if all the Propositions contain'd in them were as Fundamental as the Articles of the Apostolick Creed.

If for this be alledg'd, that there is nothing contain'd in the Confession and Catechisms, but what is express Scripture, or Conclusions drawn from the Scripture. What then? Does this render every single proposition in them an Essential of Faith, without the explicite Belief whereof we are not Christians, and consequently not in a Salvable condition? I say, an explicite Belief, because such a Belief, of all we ought to be Baptized into, is necessary.

Can our Brethren deny, that there are many Texts of Scripture that admit of different Interpretations, either of which may be maintained *Salvâ Fide*? And shall they be so arrogant as to obtrude their Abridgements and Comments upon Scripture (such as the Confession and Catechisms) as Symbols of necessary Belief to be baptiz'd into?

I appeal to the Conſciences of all Orthodox, ſerious and intelligent Chriſtians in the World, If this be not adding to the Eſſentials of Faith with a Witneſs, and contrary to the conſtant and univerſal ſenſe and practice of the Chriſtian Church in all Ages, from the beginning to this Day.

We believe as firmly as our Presbyterian Brethren can do, That the Holy Scriptures contain the whole will of God to the Children of men, and are therefore a Perfect Rule of Faith and manners; and, with *Tertullian*, We adore their fulneſs; We alſo believe, That whatever is in Scripture is alike true, becauſe Divinely inſpired. But we cannot believe all Things in them alike neceſſary to Salvation, and upon which our hopes of Heaven muſt depend. We cannot think it agreeable to the Juſtice & Goodnes of God, that our Eternal intereſt ſhould depend upon the ſenſe of many Texts of Scripture that are difficult to be underſtood, and eaſily miſtaken by the beſt of men; and by our Presbyterian Brethren as eaſily as by others, unleſs they ſet up for infallible Interpreters. And if they would ſeriouſly and candidly conſult the *New Teſtament*, they would find that our *B. Saviour* made ſhort Catechiſms and Creeds for Believers. And when his Apoſtles after him, preach'd and expounded the Doctrines of Faith, the Symbols or Creeds into which they baptized Proſelites, either *Jews* or *Gentiles*, contain'd few Articles. And tho' the Ancient Fathers and Councils found it neceſſary (becauſe of ſome Peſtilent Hereſies) to explain ſome Articles of the Creed of the Apoſtles, commonly ſo called; yet they added no new ones to it. And if men once aſſume the Liberty to go beyond the Apoſtolick Creed for the Eſſentials of Faith, 'tis hard to know where they ſhall ſtop, and the Faith of Chriſtains may, at length, be as variable as the ebbing and flowing of the Sea.

I know, different Churches and Sects of Chriſtians have defined new Propoſitions, and required aſſent to them upon ſevere penalties, but they impoſed them only as Articles of Communion, and not as Doctrines neceſſary to be Baptiz'd into: The Chriſtian World, in all Ages, being agreed that the

the Apostolick Creed is a Sufficient Symbol for this, except our present Presbyterian Brethren, and their Predecessors of no Antiquity.

The Church of *Rome* her self (amidst all the Errors and Corruptions chargeable upon her) was never, for any thing I have read or heard, chargeable with adding to the Apostolick Creed in *Baptism*. 'Tis true, whenever any went over to her from us, she required of them an Assent to other Articles before she received them into her Communion, but she never called in question the Sufficiency of the Faith they were required to profess at their *Baptism*, tho' she knew no more was required of them, than the profession of the Faith contain'd in the *Creed* (commonly called) of the *Apostles*.

Take her sense in this Affair from an eminent Doctor of her Communion, and very Zealous both for her Doctrine and Practice, I mean Cardinal *de Lugo*, who in his Treatise (*De Virtute Fidei Divinæ, Disp. 3. Sect.* 4.) speaking of the *Apostolick, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds*, says

1. *That the Apostolick Creed is a Form, by which the Catechumens and other Believers ought to profess or shew their Faith, that thereby they might prove themselves to be Christians.*

2. *That the Nicene Creed (which is rehearsed in the Mass, or Communion-Office on Sundays and High Festivals) is called the Nicene Creed, because for the most part it was composed by the Council of Nice; Not, that the use of the Apostolick Creed should be laid aside: but, that the Believers might sometimes profess certain Articles more explicitly because of Heresies.* And

3. *That the third Creed is called the Creed of Athanasius who had not Authority to compose a Creed, but only made profession of his own Faith, by that Form which was deservedly received by the Universal Church, and is solemnly rehearsed on Sundays, at Morning Prayers.*

And then he adds, *Of these three Creeds, the first only* (meaning the Apostolick Creed) *is necessary to all Believers. The*

other

other two (viz. the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds) *are necessary to Doctors and Pastors, for preventing Errors, and instructing the people.*

And, in his Treatise *De Sacramentis, Disp.* 2. *Sect.* 5. he says, *Ad Baptismum non requiritur instructio contra Hæreticos. At*, or, *in order to, Baptism, there needs no instruction against Hereticks.* Which can import no less, than that the Church of *Rome* (whose sense *de Lugo* delivers) holds that the Apostolick Creed is a Symbol of Sufficient Belief to be baptiz'd into.

So that the Error of adding to the Apostolick Creed in Baptism is Peculiar to our present Presbyterian Brethren and their late Predecessors. An Error of so Pestilential an Influence, that I am heartily grieved to find them, who profess to be of the Christian Religion (as reform'd from the Errors and Coruptions of *Rome*) chargeable with it. And unless they wilfully chuse to undergo the misery due to those who add to the *ESSENTIALS* of Christianity, rather than the shame of acknowledging their having so grossly *err'd from the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, 'Tis hop'd they will speedily retrieve, and so prevent their being convinc'd by a sad Experience, when its too late.

FINIS.

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